

writes poetry not because he must, hut because he thinks it a fine thing to do. There is a brave pretence of poetic rapture, but rarely any gleam of genuine inspiration ; a succession of brilliant fancies clothed in eloquent language, image piled upon image with gorgeous though bewildering prodigality ; but nowhere the passionate thought that goes direct to the heart, or the inevitable phrase that lingers by its beauty in the memory. Where we find merit in the verse it is usually a merit that reflects the writer's studies in poetry rather than his own native gift. Take, for instance, the following description of Athens from the second book :

A city like the dream of youthful bard,
Reposing in the shade of summer trees,
And pressing to Ms eyes his magic hand,
To call up visions of a fairer world : Blue
ocean, bowery plain, and azure sky, And
marble walls, and free-born citadel,
Glittering with snowy columns in the
sun; Statues of ivory, tablets like the
blaze Of the far-flashing twilight of the
land •, And cHoral theatres, where the
Poet's voice Blends with the whisper of
the delicate air, The messenger of
nature to his soul; And gardens of
delight, in whose green glades And
fragrant groves, or by the mossy verge
Of sparkling fountain or serener stream,
Conversing Sages teach to genial youth
Ennobling precepts; to be wise and free,
Refined and virtuous, is their theme
sublime j Or for the high and passionate
hour prepare, When from the Bema's all-
subduing throne A voice may sway the
fortunes of a world 1 Divine Equality,
thou art a God Omnipotent indeed!
Thy sacred fire Burns now in later
temples, not to fall Like thine old
shrines ; yet who can e'er forget, Whose
soul indeed thy noble faith inflames, Thy
broken altar on Athena's hill!

We feel at once that our poet has studied his Milton and is engaged in a vain endeavour to mimic him. Original as was his genius, Disraeli was always